(c) the target set to extend the facility to all the Express and Mail Trains?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The satellite based telephone services have been made available in Rajdhani Express trains running between Mumbai and New Delhi. The call charges are Rs. \2*W*- per minute for Inland calls i.e. calls within India and Rs. 162/- per minute for all International calls. These charges have been fixed provisionally.

(b) The amount payable by the Railways to Vidcsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is Rs. 12CK per minute for the Inland calls and Rs. 150- per minute for International calls.

(c) These services are planned to be extended to all the Rajdhani Express Trains by the end of 1997-98. Its extension to all the Express and mail Trains would depend upon the success and popularity of the scheme in Rajdhani Express and logistic problem of providing the service in these trains.

IPWEI technical papers on train accidents

*284. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poor quality of inspection and maintenance of tracks accounts for forty percent of rail accidents;

(b) the action taken by Government to improve quality of inespction and maintenance of tracks;

(c) whether the Institute of Permanent Way Engineers India (I.P.W.E.I) has presented to the Government 25 technical papers and also suggested various measures to prevent rail accidents mainly due to poor quality of inspection and maintenance; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government to implement the said recommendations of I.P.W.E.I. India?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) For improved maintenance and in spection of track, machines are being increasingly used progressively.

Track renewals are being carried out with modern track structure, using heavier long welded rails, concrete sleepers and track laying work is being progressively done by machines.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The recommendations are reiteration of the existing instructions and directives in regard to good maintenance practices, which were highlighted during discussions of the technical papers. All the delegates present during the Seminar from the Railways were advised to ensure their implementation.

Review of achievements of Primary Education

*285. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any review of the achievements of the primary education in the country during 1995 and 1996 as against the projection has been made by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for shortfall in -the primary education projections during 1996;

(d) the names of the State Governments which have shown unsatisfactory performance in the primary education programme; and

(e) the manner in which Government propose to proceed in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. R. BOMMAI): (a) to (c) In pursuance of the National Policy on Education 1986, as modified in 1992, concerted efforts are being made by Central and State Governments to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education before we

enter the 21st century. The progress of these efforts is reviewed regularly.

The Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Operation Blackboard, Non-Formal Education and District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) are aimed at supplementing the efforts of Suites and UTs for promotion of primary education. The major echievements of these schemes in 1995-96 are as follows:—

(i) Under the Operation Blackboard Scheme 34,360 additional posts of teachers for primary and upper primary schools were sanctioned. States and (JTs were provided assistance of Rs. 218.77 crore for salaries of teachers and Rs. 49.17 crore for purchase of teaching learning materials for upper primary schools.

(ii) 2.79 lakh Non-Formal Education centres, which provide pacilities for primary education to about 70 lakh children, were assisted by provision of Rs. 153.51 crores.

(iii) The .externally aided District Primary Education Programme was extended to 59 districts in 11 States.

The achievements under these programmes have, by and large, been commensurated with the projections.

The National Programme for Nutritional Support.to Primary Education, commonly known as Mid-day Meal* Scheme, was launched as a major Central initiative in August, 1995 to increase enrolment and retention of primary school children and improve their nutritional status. During 1995-96, the scheme was introduced in all States and UTs. The scheme covered 3.35 crore children in about 3.25 lakh schools.

According to initial reports from States/UTs, the Mid-day Meals Scheme has had a favourable impact on enrolment and attendence of children in primary classes. However, the financial allocation made for the scheme in 1995-96 could not be fully utilised due to Operational difficulties encountered by the States in lifting and distribution of foodgrains on a massive scale.

(d) Despited considerable investments, educationally backward States including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Mehya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh face major challenges such as high drop-out rates, large number of out of school children, gender, caste and regional disparities, in their endeavour to achieve the goal of UEE.

(e) The proposals for 9th Five Year Plan envisage intensification of efforts towards Universalisation of Elementary Education with a focus on the needs of backward areas, disadvantaged groups and girls.

उत्तर प्रदेश में वन भूमि

*286. **श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन :** क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या हिमालय के क्षेत्र में विशेष रूप से उत्तर प्रदेश में वन संपदा में कमी आई हैं,

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार को इस क्षेत्रमे वनो की अंधाधुंध कटाई के संबध में जानकारी थी, यदि हां तो, तत्संबधी ब्यौरा क्या है और कितने प्रतिशत वनों की कटाई हुई हैं, और

(ग) गत दो वर्षों के दौरान इस क्षेत्र में वनों की अंधाधुंध कटाई को रोकने के लिए कितने व्यक्तियों को गिरफ्तार किया गया तथा उन्हें दिए गए दंड का ब्यौरा क्या है ?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री (प्रो सैमुद्दीन सोज): (क) स्टेट आफ फारेस्ट रिपोर्ट, 1993 और 1995 के अनुसार उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य में वन क्षेत्र में कुल 26 वर्ग कि.मी. की वृद्धि दर्शाई गई है। तथापि, उत्तर प्रदेश के हिमालय क्षेत्र में इसी अवधि के दौरान वन क्षेत्र में 11 वर्ग कि.मी. तक कमी आई हैं।

(ख) उत्तर प्रदेश के आठ पर्वतीय जिलों में वन क्षेत्र में परिवर्तनों का जिलावार ब्यौरा संलग्न विवरण में दिया गया है। (नीचे देखिए)